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Patterns of International Terrorism: 1981

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A Research Paper

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Patterns of International Terrorism: 1981

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A Research Paper

*Information available as of 25 June 1982
has been used in the preparation of this report.*

The author of this paper is
Office of Global Issues. Comments and queries are
welcome and may be directed to the Chief,
International Terrorism Branch, Instability and
Insurgency Center, OGI,

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Terrorism:

The threat or use of violence for political purposes by individuals or groups, whether acting for, or in opposition to, established governmental authority, when such actions are intended to shock, stun, or intimidate a target group wider than the immediate victims.

**International
Terrorism:**

Terrorism conducted with the support of a foreign government or organization and/or directed against foreign nationals, institutions, or governments. Terrorism has involved groups seeking to overthrow specific regimes to rectify national or group grievances or to undermine international order as an end in itself.



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**Patterns of
International Terrorism:
1981**

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Since 1968 we have recorded 7,425 attacks in which 8,088 victims were held hostage and 12,139 were killed or injured. (U)

Overview

Both the number of international terrorist incidents and the number of casualties resulting from incidents fell in 1981. Deaths caused by terrorist attacks dropped dramatically from 642 in 1980 to 173 in 1981 (figure 1). Despite the decline in the number of casualties, the long-term trend is toward more serious threats to human life. In 1970 about half the international terrorist incidents were directed against people and half were directed against property. In 1981, 80 percent of such incidents were directed against people.

Attacks against Americans also declined in number with fewer casualties, but all the Americans killed in 1981 (as in 1980) were killed because of their nationality. In earlier years most were victims of indiscriminate terrorist attacks that had little or nothing to do with their citizenship.

The trend toward a broader geographic spread of international terrorism continued in 1981; incidents occurred in 91 countries, more than in any previous year. Government-sponsored international terrorist attacks were mainly directed against Middle Easterners in the Middle East.



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Patterns of International Terrorism: 1981

Twenty-four countries have granted asylum to terrorists after a hostage seizure. Cuba, Libya, Algeria, and South Yemen granted asylum most often.

Key Patterns in 1981

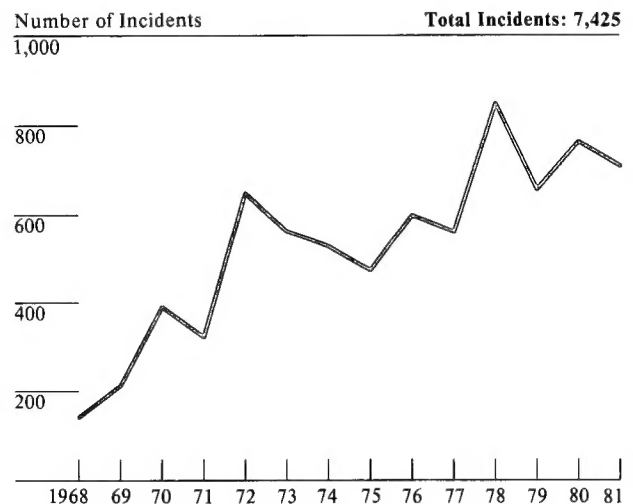
Type of Attack. In 1981, international terrorists used a variety of methods to achieve their goals—including kidnaping, hostage taking, assassination, bombing, threats, and hoaxes (table 1). The number of serious incidents—kidnapings, major bombings, assassinations, and skyjackings—dropped. Even though assassinations and assassination attempts dropped from 111 in 1980¹ to 70 last year, 1981 still had the second-highest total since we began to record such incidents in 1968.

In the first part of 1981 the number of skyjackings was high, but after a few well-publicized failures their incidence declined. In March a Pakistani commercial airliner was hijacked first to Afghanistan and then to Syria by the Pakistan Liberation Army. The resulting release of prisoners in Pakistan, combined with publicity and eventual freedom for the terrorists, probably encouraged other, less-successful attempts. An Indonesian plane was also seized in March and taken to Thailand where all the terrorists were killed by Indonesian forces, and the hijacking of a Turkish plane to Bulgaria was foiled by the pilot and passengers. Fewer incidents occurred during the rest of the year, apart from several attempts by Eastern Europeans to hijack planes to the West. One dramatic exception was the simultaneous hijacking of three planes from Venezuela via Central America to Cuba, where the hostages were released. The total number of skyjackings reported in 1981 was 32, four less than the previous year. Caution is indicated in using these



Figure 1

International Terrorist Incidents



figures, however, as we suspect far more incidents may have occurred in Eastern Europe than we have recorded.

Location of Attack. Figures for 1981 confirm a clear trend toward a greater geographic spread of international terrorism.

1970	48 countries
1975	57 countries
1980	76 countries
1981	91 countries

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Table 1

Geographic Distribution of International Terrorist Incidents, 1981, by Category

Type of Event	North America	Latin America	Western Europe	USSR/ Eastern Europe	Sub-Saharan Africa
Kidnaping	0	10	6	0	1
Barricade-hostage	3	13	12	0	1
Bombing ^a	12	25	89	1	9
Armed attack	0	7	2	0	1
Hijacking ^b	4	9	2	8	1
Assassination ^c	2	7	30	4	3
Sabotage	0	0	1	0	0
Exotic pollution	0	1	0	0	0
Subtotal	21	72	142	13	16
Bombing (minor)	12	33	52	2	6
Threat	15	18	15	6	6
Theft, break-in	1	4	5	0	0
Hoax	34	17	18	3	1
Other ^d	5	12	17	1	3
Subtotal	67	84	107	12	16
Total	88	156	249	25	32

The great majority of incidents, however, continued to occur in a few areas where conditions facilitate publicity and in some cases provide greater safety for the perpetrators—Western Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and North America. More incidents occurred in the United States than in any other country, but Argentina, Lebanon, West Germany, France, and Italy were also sites of frequent terrorism. []

Victims. In 1981, citizens of 77 countries were the victims of international terrorist incidents, more than in any previous year since we began to record such statistics in January 1968. As in past years, US citizens were the primary target, followed by those of the UK, USSR, France, Israel, Turkey, and Iraq. Attacks or threats against citizens of these seven countries accounted for more than 60 percent of the 709 incidents (including threats and hoaxes) recorded in 1981. Incidents directed against American citizens or facilities totaled 258 last year. []

In terms of who or what is attacked, there are several clear and ominous trends. In 1970 about half of the incidents were against people, the rest against property. Now, 80 percent are directed against people. Diplomats are the foremost category; the number of attacks against them rose from an average of 165 per year during 1975-79 to 409 in 1980 and then dropped to 368 in 1981, when they constituted more than half of all victims. This is due in part to the rising number of attacks sponsored by governments, which tend to single out enemy diplomats, dissidents, and prominent exiles living abroad. Businessmen, mostly Americans in Latin America, were the victims in 12 percent of the incidents, and military personnel were involved in about 9 percent. Attacks against military personnel constitute one of the fastest growing categories. []

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Table 1 (continued)

Type of Event	Middle East/ North Africa	Asia	Pacific	Unknown	Total
Kidnaping	5	0	0	0	22
Barricade-hostage	3	0	0	0	32
Bombing ^a	33	1	0	0	170
Armed attack	15	0	0	0	25
Hijacking ^b	3	5	0	0	32
Assassination ^c	20	3	1	0	70
Sabotage	0	0	0	0	1
Exotic pollution	0	0	0	0	1
Subtotal	79	9	1	0	353
Bombing (minor)	13	4	0	0	122
Threat	7	6	0	0	73
Theft, break-in	2	1	0	0	13
Hoax	6	5	1	0	85
Other ^d	22	2	0	1	63
Subtotal	50	18	1	1	356
Total	129	27	2	1	709


^a Bombings where damage or casualties occurred, or where a group claimed responsibility.


^b Hijackings of air, sea, or land transport.

^c Includes assassination or attempt to assassinate where the victim was preselected by name.

^d Includes conspiracy, and other actions such as sniping, shootout with police, and arms smuggling.

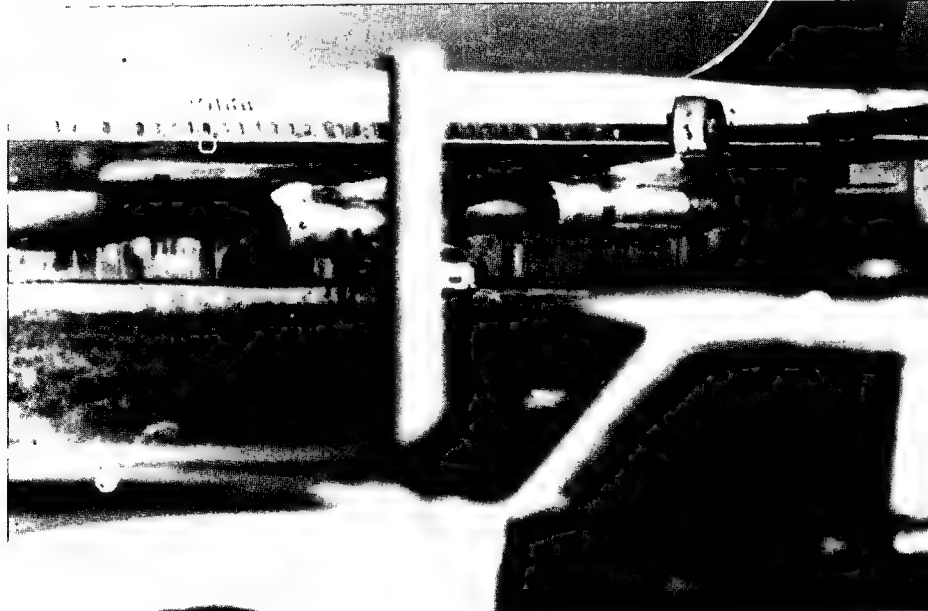


Terrorist Groups. A total of 113 groups claimed credit for international terrorist incidents in 1981, down slightly from the high of 128 in 1980. These numbers are undoubtedly inflated: some groups create cover names to avoid responsibility for a particular action, others use them to commemorate an anniversary, and common criminals create still others to mislead investigators. The terrorists represented 86 nationalities, but, as in the past, Palestinians, Armenians, West Germans, and Central Americans were responsible for the majority of incidents. 

Terrorist Events Causing Death or Injury. Only about one-fourth as many people were killed in terrorist attacks in 1981 as in the previous year—173 compared with 642. The number injured also dropped, but not as dramatically (figure 2). The patterns were, however, similar to previous years. Assassination attempts and bombings accounted for the majority of attacks that involved casualties, and most of these incidents occurred in Western Europe and the Middle East. Terrorists appear to have been more careful in selecting their targets, and more than half of such attacks resulted in harm only to the intended victim, whereas in the past innocent bystanders were much more often killed or injured. 

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*Pakistani airliner held by
Pakistan Liberation Army at
Damascus Airport—one of 32
hijackings in 1981.* [redacted]



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Attacks that produced casualties occurred in 56 countries. The greatest number took place in Lebanon, where many of the Middle Eastern terrorist groups are headquartered and where responsibility for security is fragmented. Included in the Lebanese total are a number of Iraqi and Iranian attacks on each other's diplomats. [redacted]

Fifty-eight terrorist groups claimed responsibility for attacks that produced casualties in 1981, compared with 49 in 1980. The Armenian and Palestinian groups were responsible for most of these attacks. Nationalities most victimized changed little from 1980: Americans were most numerous among casualties, followed by Israelis, Britons, Iraqis, and Iranians. [redacted]

Between 1968 and 1981, 189 American citizens were killed in international terrorist attacks. Almost half of them were victims of indiscriminate killings, but the number of Americans singled out for assassination has increased steadily since the mid-1970s, and all Americans killed in 1981 had been selected for assassination. [redacted]

Attacks Against Americans. A total of 258 international terrorist incidents were directed against American citizens or property during 1981—slightly more than in most previous years but not as many as in 1978 and 1980. There were nine kidnappings, 14 assassination attacks, and 91 bombings of US property—about the same as in 1980. Threats dropped significantly from 50 to 29, but hoaxes rose from 25 to 51 (table 2 and figure 3). [redacted]

A new and ominous development is that all the Americans killed by international terrorist attacks in 1980 and 1981 were assassinated because of their nationality. In earlier years, most Americans killed in such incidents were victims of indiscriminate attacks that had little or nothing to do with their nationality. Moreover, at least one terrorist group, the Red Brigades, is known to have shifted to less well protected American officials after initially planning to attack a closely guarded target. [redacted]

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Categories of Terrorist Incidents

Kidnaping

Seizure of one or more victims, who are then moved to a hideout.

Barricade-hostage

Seizure of a facility with whatever hostages are available; their release is made contingent on meeting terrorists' demands.

Bombing

Major bombing—use of any type of explosive or incendiary device for terrorist purposes, including those delivered through the mail, when significant damage or casualties occur or a terrorist group claims responsibility.

Minor bombing—same as above except that there are no casualties and little or no damage, and no group claims responsibility.

Armed attack

An attempt to seize or damage a facility, with no intent to hold it for negotiating purposes.

Hijacking

An attempt to seize an airplane, ship, or other vehicle, with whatever hostages may be in it, to force some action—movement to another country and/or agreement by the authorities involved to some terrorist demand.

Assassination

An attempt, whether or not successful, to kill a preselected victim, usually with small arms or bombs. Letter bombs are excluded from this category, although, in at least some cases, there probably is a specific intended victim.

Sabotage

Intentional destruction of property by means other than bombing.

Exotic pollution

Use of exotic substances—atomic, chemical, or biological—to contaminate material; for example, the introduction of mercury into oranges shipped from Israel.

Threat/hoax

The stated intent by a terrorist group to carry out an attack, or a false alert to authorities about a coming terrorist attack by a named group.

These incidents serve terrorists' purposes in that they tend to alarm and intimidate potential victims, their parent states and organizations, and often the local populace. They usually cause facilities to be evacuated, absorb the time of investigative authorities, and generally disrupt the work of the threatened group.

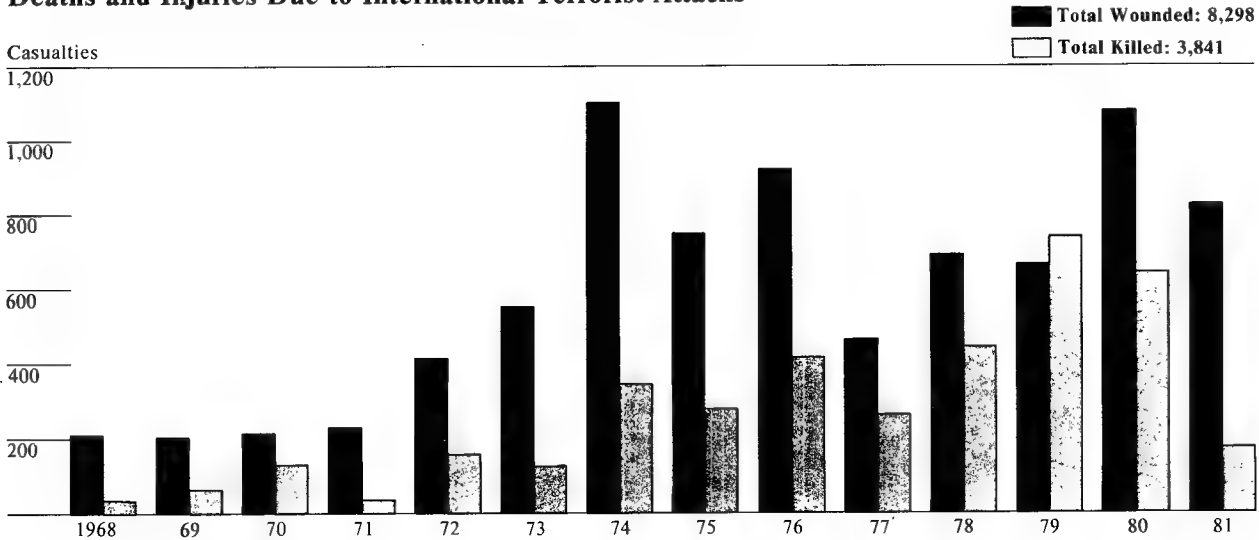
Well over half the recorded threats and hoaxes are directed against US citizens—673 out of a total of 1,081 threats and 78 out of 143 hoaxes. This is at least partially attributable to the fact that we have much more information about such incidents than we do about threats or hoaxes directed against other nations' citizens. Moreover, much of the information we have on such incidents directed against foreigners is derived from their reports to US authorities about such attacks in the United States—frequently at the UN.

Theft, break-in

Illegal entry into a facility to intimidate or harass its owners.

Other

Includes sniping, shootouts with police, arms smuggling, and credible reports of plotting a terrorist attack that is subsequently foiled or aborted. In all cases a terrorist group is named.

Secret**Figure 2****Deaths and Injuries Due to International Terrorist Attacks**

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In 1981, 17 percent of incidents directed against Americans resulted in at least one casualty. Six Americans were killed and 31 wounded in international terrorist attacks in 1981. These numbers are slightly lower than in the last few years. This is partially due to good fortune; the number of attempted violent attacks has not decreased. [REDACTED]

Seventy-two international terrorist groups took credit for attacks against Americans in 1981. The Colombian leftist group, 19th of April Movement (M-19), claimed the largest number. The Red Army Faction (RAF) and its sympathizers in West Germany and terrorist groups in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Peru also carried out a significant number of attacks against Americans. [REDACTED]

In addition to non-government-sponsored terrorist attacks in 1981, the United States was confronted by Qadhafi's threat to assassinate President Reagan and other senior US Government officials and to attack US facilities abroad. [REDACTED]

All six American citizens killed in 1981 were assassinated in Latin America, where more than one-third of the incidents directed against Americans occurred. While the attacks were no more frequent than in 1980, the number of attacks in both 1980 and 1981 was higher than in any previous year. Five assassination attacks, eight kidnappings, 37 bombings, and four skyjackings that involved Americans were recorded in Latin America during the year:

- In El Salvador 15 incidents took place, including a series of armed attacks against the US Embassy in March and April and the murder of two Americans in January.
- In Guatemala there were 14 attacks, including five kidnappings and the murder of three US citizens.

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The Iraqi Embassy in Beirut was destroyed by a car bomb on 15 December 1981. [redacted]



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- In Costa Rica, a bomb destroyed a van carrying US Marine guards to the US Embassy, injuring three guards and their driver.
- In Colombia, the M-19 carried out eight attacks on Americans during the year, including the murder of kidnaped missionary Chester Bitterman.
- In Peru, the US Chancery and the Ambassador's residence were bombed on 31 August. [redacted]

A total of 30 attacks were directed against US personnel and property in West Germany during 1981—more than in any other year. They were carried out by RAF members or sympathizers, and included an attempt to assassinate General Kroesen as well as numerous bombings of US facilities. The last bombing of the year, on 31 August at Ramstein AFB, damaged the headquarters building and injured 18 people, including a US brigadier general. [redacted]

The Broader Picture

Since we began recording international terrorist incidents in 1968, a number of broad patterns have emerged. Some are relatively unchanging, such as the distribution of terrorist incidents—where Western

Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East continue to account for about three-fourths of all incidents (figure 4). Almost half the incidents recorded since 1968 have occurred in only nine countries. The greatest number were recorded in the United States (partly because information is better); other nations with a large number of incidents include Argentina, Italy, France, West Germany, Iran, Turkey, Greece, and Israel. These are convenient locations for terrorist operations, and in many cases the incident did not even involve citizens of the country in which the event occurred. Fewer than 20 percent of the events in France involved French terrorists, for example, and an even smaller portion involved French nationals as victims. [redacted]

Over the past 14 years more than 20 percent of all international terrorist incidents occurred in Latin America, and the number in that region has been increasing faster than in other parts of the world. More attacks were recorded in 1980-81 than in any other two-year period since 1968, primarily reflecting

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Table 2

**Geographic Distribution of International
Terrorist Attacks on US Citizens
and Property, 1981, by Category**

Type of Event	North America	Latin America	Western Europe	USSR/ Eastern Europe	Sub- Saharan Africa
Kidnaping	0	8	1	0	0
Barricade-hostage	0	2	0	0	0
Bombing ^a	4	21	21	0	1
Armed attack	0	5	0	0	0
Hijacking ^b	4	6	2	4	0
Assassination ^c	0	5	3	0	0
Sabotage	0	0	1	0	0
Subtotal	8	47	28	4	1
Bombing (minor)	5	16	17	0	1
Threat	3	8	7	2	2
Theft, break-in	0	1	2	0	0
Hoax	6	15	15	3	1
Other ^d	1	8	8	1	2
Subtotal	15	48	49	6	6
Total	23	95	77	10	7

the spillover of increased domestic violence into the international arena. In most cases the attacks were carried out by indigenous groups against foreigners in an attempt to discredit or undermine the local regime. In some cases the attacks were by rightwing groups against foreigners who were thought to sympathize with antigovernment forces. []

From 1968 through 1981, we recorded 1,512 international terrorist incidents in the Middle East and North Africa. The number of attacks in the region was highest in 1978 (reflecting increased anti-American activity in Iran), remained high in 1979 and 1980, and declined somewhat in 1981. As in Latin America, much of the international terrorism is a spillover from domestic violence. Iran in 1978 is a good example. Most of the attacks in the region were carried out by Middle Eastern terrorists, and about half were directed at other Middle Eastern citizens. Responsibility was claimed by 151 different terrorist groups—mostly Palestinian.² []

² These groups were more active in the early 1970s. []

While citizens of almost every country have been victimized by international terrorism, most incidents have been directed against those of only a few countries (figure 5). Our records show that between 1968 and 1981, citizens of 131 different countries were victimized by international terrorism; attacks against US, Israeli, UK, West German, French, and USSR nationals account for more than 60 percent of all the incidents. Americans were by far the most often targeted.³ Of the 7,425 attacks recorded, 38 percent were directed against American citizens. This reflects the wide geographic spread of American interests and the fact that US citizens are regarded as symbols of Western wealth and power. []

Each year, between 35 and 45 percent of all the international terrorist incidents are directed against US personnel or property. The second-highest number

³ The proportions are skewed by the fact that we have much better information on incidents that involve the United States. []

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Table 2 (continued)

Type of Event	Middle East/ North Africa	Asia	Pacific	Unknown	Total
Kidnaping	0	0	0	0	9
Barricade-hostage	0	0	0	0	2
Bombing ^a	0	0	0	0	47
Armed attack	2	0	0	0	7
Hijacking ^b	1	4	0	0	21
Assassination ^c	5	1	0	0	14
Sabotage	0	0	0	0	1
Subtotal	8	5	0	0	101
Bombing (minor)	2	3	0	0	44
Threat	3	4	0	0	29
Theft, break-in	2	1	0	0	6
Hoax	6	4	1	0	51
Other ^d	6	1	0	0	27
Subtotal	19	13	1	0	157
Total	27	18	1	0	258

^a Bombings where damage or casualties occurred, or where a group claimed responsibility.

^b Hijackings of air, sea, or land transport.

^c Includes assassination or attempt to assassinate where the victim was preselected by name.

^d Includes conspiracy, and other actions such as sniping, shootout with police, and arms smuggling.

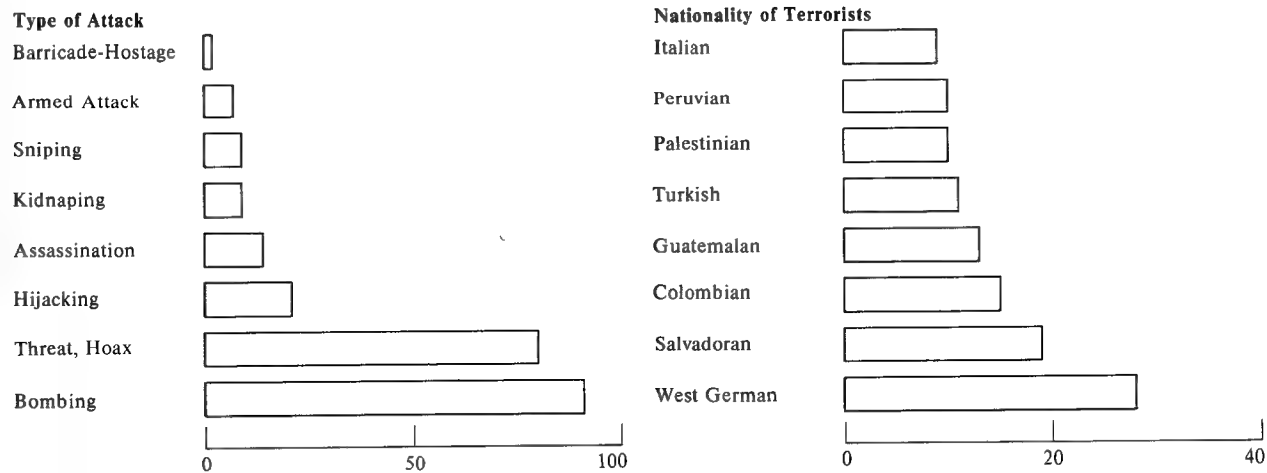
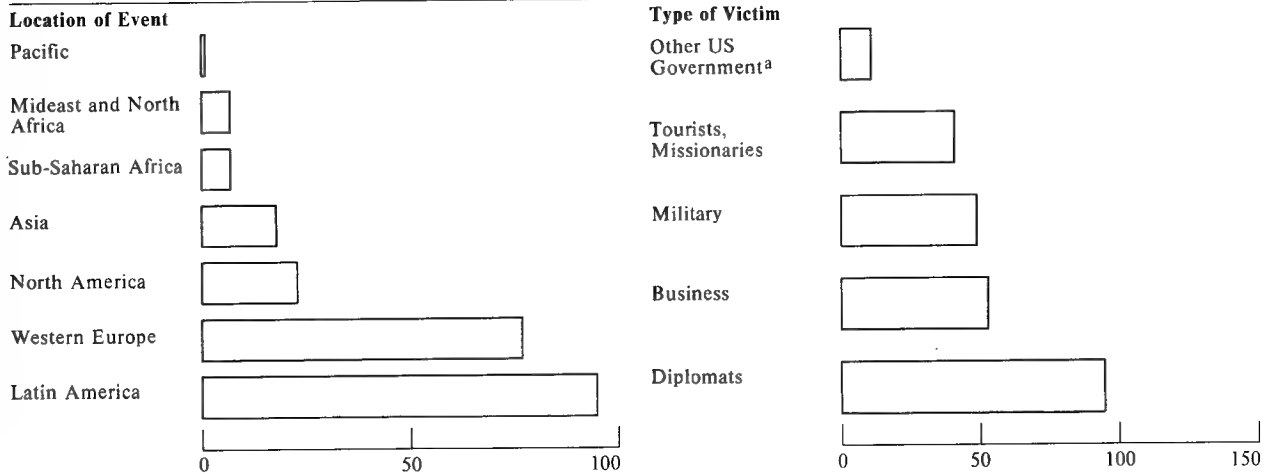
of incidents against any single country has consistently been far less—about 10 percent of the total. Usually either Israel or the UK has been the second most victimized country. In 1979, however, it was France and in 1980, the USSR. [REDACTED]

Diplomats have been the foremost target of terrorist incidents, accounting for nearly 40 percent of the total (figure 6). Businesses and businessmen are the second most frequent victims of terrorist incidents. During the 14 years, almost one-fourth of the incidents were

directed against business, especially American business in Latin America. The number reached a high in 1978 and declined thereafter—in part because of increased security, improved operating procedures in high risk areas, and, most importantly, a shift in focus by many terrorist groups. [REDACTED]

Secret**Figure 3****International Terrorist Attacks on US Personnel and Facilities, 1981**

Number of Incidents

^aExcluding military and diplomatic personnel.

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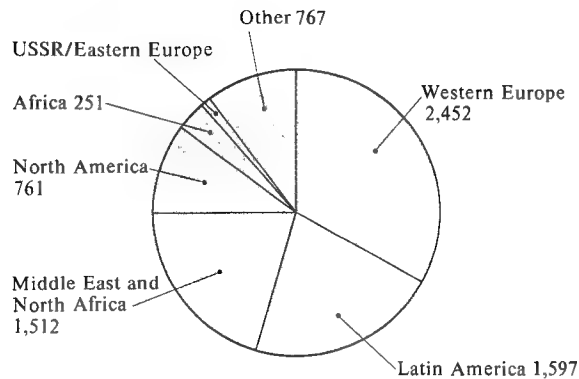
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Figure 4
Geographic Distribution of International
Terrorist Attacks, 1968-81

Number of Attacks Total Incidents: 7,425



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Although military personnel are not as large a segment of the victim population as diplomats or businessmen, we have recorded 600 terrorist attacks (fewer than 10 percent of the total) against them. The number of attacks against the military is increasing at the greatest rate. [REDACTED]

The pattern of terrorist events that produce casualties appears to be changing. In 1,614 such incidents (figure 7), 3,841 people were killed and 8,298 wounded. Bombings and assassinations account for more than 70 percent of the attacks that produced casualties. Bombings have always been the most prevalent, perhaps the most serious being the 15 December 1981 bombing of the Iraqi Embassy in Beirut, which killed at least 55 and injured another 100. [REDACTED]

For the last two years, incidents involving hostage-seizures have been more successfully countered as governments became better trained and equipped to deal with the situation. Our records show that hostages were successfully rescued by forces from Britain, the Philippines, Turkey, Italy, Cuba, and Mexico in 1980; and from Indonesia, Bolivia, France, Pakistan, Poland, Sweden, Spain, and the Netherlands in 1981. [REDACTED]

In recent years, however, assassination attempts have increased dramatically, especially from 1977 to 1980.

1968-76	20 (annual average)
1977	34
1978	54
1979	65
1980	111
1981	70

This increase is attributable to the fact that several countries—Libya, Syria, and Iran among them—have increasingly used their military and intelligence services to carry out terrorist attacks against foreign diplomats or their own exiles. [REDACTED]

US citizens have been the victims of only 20 percent of all attacks that produced casualties, while suffering more than 40 percent of all international terrorist incidents. US businessmen have been the primary target of casualty-producing attacks, but attacks on US diplomats and military personnel have increased at a faster rate in recent years. [REDACTED]

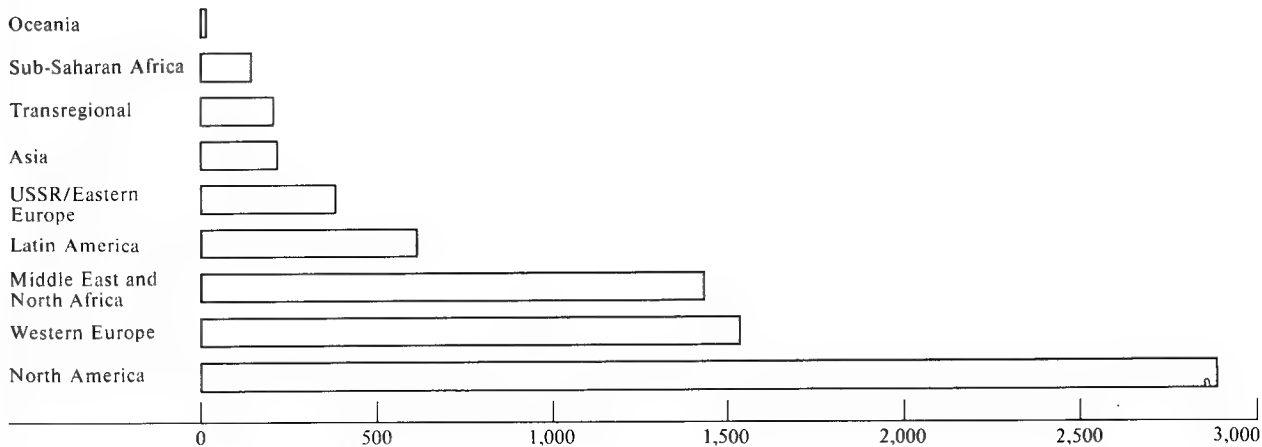
Over the period 1968-81, attacks on Americans that produced casualties occurred in 69 countries, most frequently in Argentina, Iran, and the Philippines. More than 155 terrorist groups claimed responsibility for one or more attacks. The Argentine Montoneros and Iranian and Palestinian groups have been the most prominent perpetrators. [REDACTED]

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Secret**Figure 5****Nationality of Victims of International Terrorist Attacks, 1968-81**

Number of Incidents

Total Incidents: 7,425



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This year, for the first time, we have grouped terrorist incidents into more serious and less serious categories. As shown on figure 8, the number of serious incidents—such as kidnappings, the taking of hostages, assassination attacks, and major bombings—rose rapidly in the early 1970s, remained fairly steady between 1974 and 1979, then jumped to new highs in 1980-81. Less serious incidents have fluctuated more widely. The peak year for relatively minor incidents, 1978, saw a drop in serious incidents. Minor bombings and threats account for more than 80 percent of the less serious incidents.

The trend of serious international terrorist incidents involving US citizens or property has shown little variation (figure 9). It peaked in 1975, declined thereafter, only to rise somewhat in the past two years. Less serious incidents account for most of the year-to-year variation in total incidents involving the United States.

Terrorist Groups

More than 670 groups have claimed credit for at least one international attack since we began keeping statistics in 1968. This number is undoubtedly inflated: some of these are cover names for organizations wishing to deny responsibility for a particular action, and some have probably been used by common criminals to throw off investigators or by psychotics seeking public recognition. The list includes the names of nations that conduct international terrorism such as Libya and Syria, insurgency groups that use terrorist tactics, separatist groups such as the ETA, and nihilist groups such as the Red Army Faction and the Japanese Red Army. It includes leftwing groups, rightwing groups, anti-American groups, anti-Soviet groups, environmentalist groups, and even religious groups. They represent the spectrum of ideologies, classes, cultures, and races.

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Figure 6
Type of Victim of International Terrorist
Attacks, 1968-81

Number of Attacks Total Incidents: 7,425

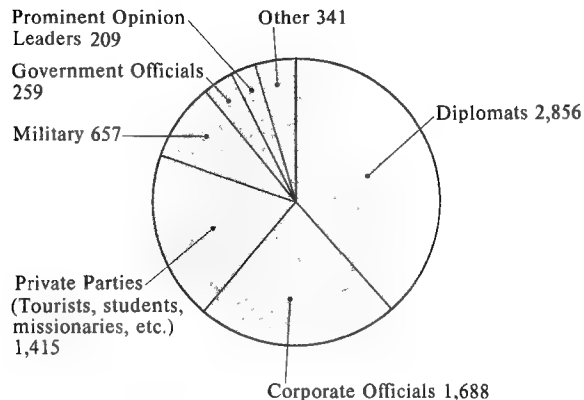
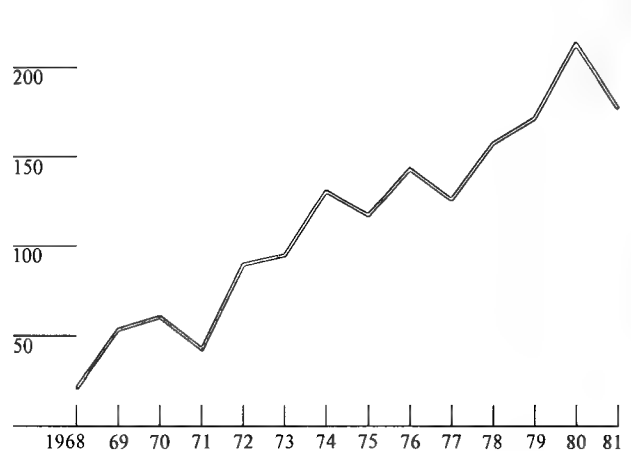


Figure 7
International Terrorist Incidents That
Caused Casualties

Number of Incidents Total Incidents: 1,614



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The annual number of groups that claim credit for attacks has increased markedly since we began keeping statistics. For example, 49 groups claimed credit for attacks in 1970, rising to 111 groups by 1975, and to 128 groups by 1980. It dropped slightly to 113 in 1981. [REDACTED]

While some terrorist groups have dropped out during the 14-year period, a large number have persisted. These groups are well organized, with a dedicated core of well-trained and highly motivated terrorists. Moreover, they usually have at least some popular support. Although the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) is primarily a domestic terrorist group that conducts operations in Northern Ireland, our records show that the PIRA and its sympathizers have conducted more international terrorism than any other group. The PIRA has launched attacks from several countries, and the attacks have involved citizens from at least 15 countries, although the majority were against British nationals. [REDACTED]

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Black September has carried out the second-largest number of attacks, most of them in Europe and the Middle East, targeted against Israelis and moderate Palestinians. Other Palestinian groups—particularly the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the PFLP-General Command, and Black June—have conducted terrorist incidents during the past 14 years. Together, the Palestinian groups perpetrated more international attacks than any other movement. Our records show 9 percent of all terrorist attacks, almost 700 attacks, have been carried out by Palestinians. [REDACTED]

Other significant groups that have been active in international terrorism are the Montoneros, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA), the Basque Fatherland and Liberty, the

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Table 3

**International
Terrorist Attacks on US Citizens
and Property, 1968-81, by Category**

Type of Event	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
Kidnaping	1	3	25	19	5	22	14	23
Barricade-hostage	1	0	4	0	1	3	2	1
Bombing ^a	13	31	29	37	44	28	80	71
Armed attack	1	4	3	5	10	8	6	7
Hijacking ^b	1	5	12	4	4	0	1	2
Assassination ^c	3	3	10	2	4	4	2	8
Sabotage	0	0	0	3	3	1	0	1
Subtotal	20	46	83	70	71	66	105	113
Bombing (minor)	36	62	106	105	100	79	79	41
Threat	11	12	51	51	71	77	19	19
Theft, break-in	0	3	15	8	1	3	4	3
Hoax	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Other ^d	4	1	10	9	12	11	9	5
Subtotal	51	78	183	173	184	170	111	68
Total	71	124	266	243	255	236	216	181

April 19 Movement, and the Red Army Faction. Among the states most active in carrying out international terrorist attacks are Libya, Iran, Syria, and Iraq. [REDACTED]

Activities of Significant Groups in 1981

We recorded 113 terrorist groups that claimed credit for international attacks during 1981. The terrorists represented 86 nationalities, and, as in the past, Palestinians, Armenians, Germans, Salvadorans, and Guatemalans carried out the most attacks. The following describes the domestic and international activities in 1981 of the major international terrorist groups. [REDACTED]

Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia.

ASALA carried out more international attacks during 1981 than any other terrorist organization. Its primary targets in the past have been Turkish diplomats and diplomatic facilities, but open sources show that under the cover names 3 October and 9 June ASALA has attacked Swiss interests in retaliation for the arrest of ASALA members on those dates, and,

using the name Orly Organization, it has attacked French interests in retaliation for the November arrest of an Armenian carrying a false passport at Orly Airport. ASALA carried out 40 attacks in 11 countries during the year. Although most of the attacks were bombings against French and Swiss property, the most serious were attacks against Turkish diplomats. These included the 24 September seizure of the Turkish Consulate in Paris and the assassination of Turkish diplomats in Switzerland, Denmark, and France. [REDACTED]

Palestinian Terrorists. Palestinian terrorists have not been as active in international terrorism in recent years as during the mid-1970s, with most groups standing down in response to Yasir Arafat's pursuit of the diplomatic track. In 1981, some radical Palestinian groups, with the support of the Libyan and Syrian Governments, resumed international terrorist attacks. Palestinian terrorists carried out a total of 49 attacks during 1981; groups such as the 15 May Organization, Black June, and the PFLP-SC were the most

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Table 3 (continued)

Type of Event	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	Total
Kidnaping	8	7	8	8	10	9	162
Barricade-hostage	2	3	0	6	7	2	32
Bombing ^a	54	63	42	35	39	47	613
Armed attack	8	5	12	10	11	7	97
Hijacking ^b	5	4	3	15	20	21	97
Assassination ^c	15	6	7	10	18	14	106
Sabotage	1	0	0	1	0	1	11
Subtotal	93	88	72	85	105	101	1,118
Bombing (minor)	71	72	133	91	58	44	1,077
Threat	53	22	161	47	50	29	673
Theft, break-in	1	0	7	4	13	6	68
Hoax	0	0	0	1	25	51	78
Other ^d	13	13	23	28	27	27	192
Subtotal	138	107	324	171	173	157	2,088
Total	231	195	396	256	278	258	3,206


^a Bombings where damage or casualties occurred, or where a group claimed responsibility.


^b Hijackings of air, sea, or land transport.

^c Includes assassination or attempt to assassinate where the victim was preselected by name.

^d Includes conspiracy, and other actions such as sniping, shootout with police, and arms smuggling.



active. This is far more than recorded in 1979 or 1980 but about the same as during the mid-1970s. The attacks were committed in 14 countries, the majority of them in Lebanon. They were primarily against Israelis, but citizens of 13 other countries were also victims and five of the attacks were directed against other Palestinian groups. Most of the incidents were bombings, six were assassination attempts, five were armed attacks, and one was a rocket attack. 

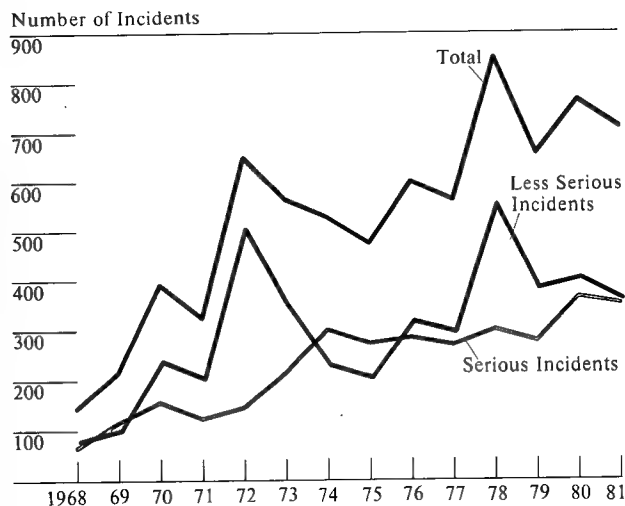
embassies in Vienna and Athens and on El Al offices in Italy and Turkey. It also claimed credit for the bombing of a Cypriot cruise ship in Haifa, Israel, on 20 December. The PFLP-SC carried out a series of bombings in Kuwait and is believed responsible for the 20 October bombing of a synagogue in Antwerp, Belgium, which killed two women and injured 107 other persons. 

The 15 May Organization and the PFLP-SC are both radical splinter groups of the PFLP's former terrorist apparatus. The former carried out attacks against Israeli targets in Europe, including bomb attacks on the

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Figure 8

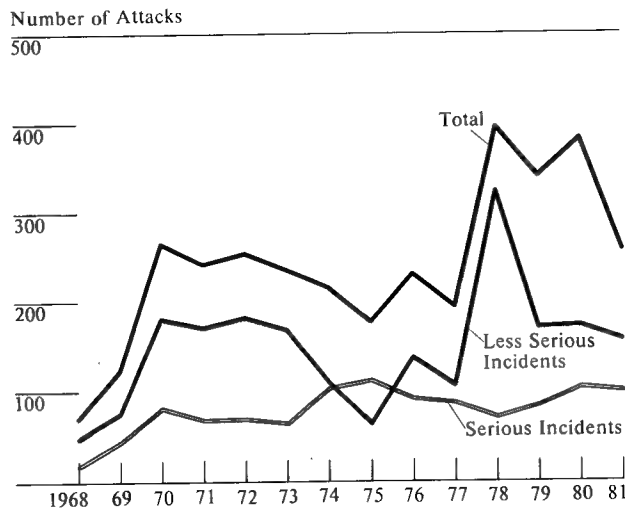
International Terrorist Incidents, 1968-81



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Figure 9

International Terrorist Attacks on US Personnel and Facilities, 1968-81



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The Black June Organization (BJO), a radical Palestinian group which opposes political settlement with Israel and Arafat's moderate policies, was also very active during 1981. The group originally worked only for Iraq but now operates from both Syria and Iraq and is supported by both countries. Black June has targeted moderate Palestinians, Israelis, and non-Israeli Jews.

On 23

September, BJO launched a hand grenade attack on the offices of an Israeli shipping line in Cyprus. Black June killed moderate Palestinian leaders on 1 June in Brussels and on 9 October in Rome. (This is the group that attempted to assassinate the Israeli Ambassador in London on 3 June 1982, an incident that preceded the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.)

Provisional Irish Republican Army. The PIRA was more active in 1981 than in most previous years. It retaliated for the attempted assassination of Bernadette Devlin McAliskey with the murder of Sir Norman Stronge and his son. Both were leading Protestants in Northern Ireland, and both served in various police capacities.

PIRA expanded the tactic of prisoner hunger strikes. After a 66-day fast, Bobby Sands died on 5 May. He was the first and most widely publicized PIRA militant to die in 1981. Nine other PIRA and Irish National Liberation Army members died in vain attempts to gain prisoner-of-war status for the terrorist inmates. After the failure of the hunger strikes, the PIRA intensified its campaign of violence in England.

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Armenian terrorist holding an employee of the Turkish Consulate in Paris. [REDACTED]

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In October and November it claimed credit for bombing facilities in London, mailed several bombs to British facilities, kidnaped the son of a wealthy Irish businessman, and attempted to assassinate the Commanding General of the British Royal Marines. PIRA sympathizers destroyed British cars in West Germany, bombed a British cultural center in Greece, attacked British targets in Portugal, and threatened British facilities in Switzerland. [REDACTED]

Red Army Faction. The Red Army Faction in 1981 launched a series of attacks against the US presence in West Germany despite a series of setbacks in 1980. The RAF had been rebuilding its operational structure for some time, and in an attempt to capitalize on the controversy over NATO nuclear weapons modernization plans and "squatters' rights" in West Berlin,

the RAF and its sympathizer groups, the Black Block and the so-called antifascist groups carried out 27 attacks during 1981. [REDACTED]

The RAF or its supporters claimed credit for numerous attacks during the year. It firebombed US military facilities in Frankfurt and Wiesbaden. It attempted to bomb the US library in West Berlin and the Dow chemical plant in Dusseldorf. On 31 August the RAF exploded a car bomb at the US Air Force Headquarters at Ramstein. It attempted to assassinate US Gen. Frederick Kroesen on 15 September, firing two rocket-propelled antitank weapons at Kroesen's car; one missed, and the other hit the trunk. The car was severely damaged, but no one was seriously injured. Sympathizer groups also attacked West German and US targets in Germany and other European countries. The Black Block bombed two US military facilities near Frankfurt and attempted to bomb the railroad line to the Rhein/Main airbase. Others bombed the US Consul General's office and a military base near Frankfurt and US military facilities in Kassal, Wiesbaden, and West Berlin. They also attacked a West German consulate in Switzerland and the US Embassy in Sofia. [REDACTED]

Red Brigades. Despite some setbacks early in the year, the Red Brigades broadened their targets to include foreign nationals in 1981. The confessions of Patrizio Peci, the arrest of RB planner Mario Moretti, and increased government antiterrorist activity contributed to pressure on the Brigades. [REDACTED]

The Red Brigades claimed credit for numerous attacks during the past year—the assassination of a hospital director in Milan, a prison warden in Rome, and four police officials. The Brigades kidnaped three individuals, murdering one and releasing the other two after holding them for lengthy periods. In retaliation for Peci's testimony, the Brigades kidnaped and killed his brother and shot one of his defense attorneys. During the year, the Brigades also wounded 12 victims, bombed four facilities, and robbed a bank in Rome. [REDACTED]

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Jewish synagogue in Belgium after bombing by Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine/Special Command. [redacted]



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On 17 December, the Brigades kidnaped US Army Brig. Gen. James Dozier from his home in Verona, Italy. Italian authorities subsequently arrested more than 300 suspects and uncovered large amounts of weapons and supplies in the search for Dozier and subsequent counterterrorist operations. On 28 January 1982, Italian officers rescued Dozier from a safehouse in Padua. [redacted]

Basque Fatherland and Liberty. In Spain, the ETA-PM and the ETA-M, both Marxist-Leninist-oriented Basque separatist organizations, continued their campaign of violence against the Spanish Government. They also targeted citizens from six other countries in Spain, including threats to bomb the US airbase near Torrejon. [redacted]

Early in January the government granted greater autonomy for the Basque region in an attempt to decrease tension, but this did not stop the terrorists; they claimed credit for many attacks during the next few months. Near the end of January the terrorists fired antitank weapons at government buildings in two Basque cities, kidnaped a prominent citizen in

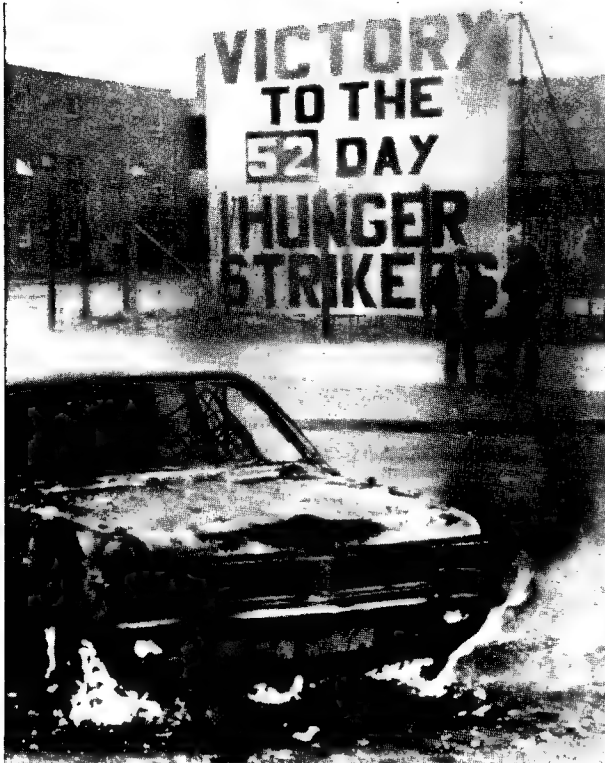
Bilbao, and kidnaped and murdered the chief nuclear engineer at the Lemoniz power plant in northern Spain. During the same month, the Spanish police freed unharmed a prominent doctor who had been kidnaped in Madrid and was being held in northeast Spain by ETA-PM for a US \$2 million ransom. [redacted]

On 20 February, in a coordinated operation, the ETA kidnaped the honorary consuls to Spain from Austria, El Salvador, and Uruguay. The consuls were held for a week, and the attack received widespread publicity. [redacted]

On 23 February the ETA-PM announced its intention to abandon terrorism. Shortly thereafter the ETA-M increased its terrorist campaign. In February and March it bombed facilities, attacked police patrols, and assassinated prominent members of the Spanish Government. A few months later the ETA-M carried out another series of attacks, which included assaults on police and Civil Guard facilities and bombings of the Spanish electric company. [redacted]

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During 1981 the Provisional Irish Republican Army continued its tactic of prisoner hunger strikes. [redacted]

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April 19th Movement. The Colombian April 19th Movement (M-19) carried out 11 international terrorist operations in 1981, including bombings, hijackings, and one kidnapping. All of the incidents occurred in Colombia and almost all were targeted against the United States. A faction of the group kidnapped a US citizen, Chester Bitterman, and after weeks of negotiations and threats Bitterman's body was found in an abandoned bus in Bogota. [redacted]

The M-19 attempted large-scale military operations on 8 and 11 March, launching amphibious attacks on three remote villages in southern Colombia. Government forces killed or captured some of the terrorists; other M-19 members, including several leaders, fled to Ecuador and surrendered to Ecuadorean authorities. They were quickly returned to the Colombian

Government. M-19 suffered another major setback when a truckload of sophisticated weapons, including rocket grenades and machineguns, was captured by the Colombian border guard. [redacted]

Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood (MB), a fundamentalist Islamic group, has attacked Soviet and Syrian Government targets in Syria. Our files (which may not be complete in this area) record that 14 Soviet military officers were assassinated in 1980. In 1981 the assassination campaign against Soviet nationals was set back by more active Soviet and Syrian security precautions. We recorded two MB attacks against Soviet facilities: the TASS office in Damascus was bombed on 16 June, and the Soviet military assistance headquarters in Damascus was attacked on 5 October. The latter resulted in at least four Soviets killed and 20 injured. [redacted]

Marxist-Leninist Armed Propaganda Unit. In Turkey the Marxist-Leninist Armed Propaganda Unit (MLAPU), a faction of the Turkish People's Liberation Party/Front, the most anti-US of all the leftist groups in Turkey, was responsible for the deaths of seven Americans in 1979 and one in 1980. MLAPU killed no Americans in 1981 and met with very little success in other terrorist attacks during the year. [redacted]

Since imposition of martial law in September 1980, the Turkish military government has killed or arrested a number of MLAPU members, raided safehouses, and executed convicted MLAPU members already in captivity. Although the group suffered setbacks during the year, it was able to conduct some terrorist

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operations, both against the US presence in Turkey and against the Turkish Government. On 22 January three men attempted to assassinate two US soldiers as they walked to a bus stop. As one of the attackers raised a pistol, one of the intended victims threw a portable radio at him and the attackers ran. One of the assailants was later identified as a known member of the MLAPU. On 6 April, the MLAPU claimed credit for an attack on a US military vehicle. Although the vehicle was hit by machinegun fire a number of times, no one was seriously injured. The terrorists who carried out this attack were arrested in a raid on a safehouse the following day. [REDACTED]

Special Cases—Guatemala and El Salvador. In Guatemala and El Salvador prolonged domestic strife has created fertile soil for terrorism, both domestic and international. Terrorism is a major tactic of both leftwing and rightwing groups in El Salvador. Of the five leftwing groups forming the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), the Popular Liberation Forces (FPL) is the strongest and largest. Groups operating under the rubric FMLN or FPL claimed responsibility for most of the attacks in 1981, including 18 attacks on US personnel or facilities and 10 attacks on the embassies or private facilities of other Central American countries. Among the incidents involving Americans was a series of attacks on the US Embassy during March and April. Other attacks on Americans in El Salvador included the bombing of the Exxon compound, a Hardees restaurant, and the Citibank facilities. [REDACTED]

Rightwing terrorists were also active in El Salvador, with most attacks against other Salvadoran citizens. On 3 January the head of the agrarian reform program and two American advisers were assassinated by three terrorists while at a dinner meeting at the Sheraton Hotel in San Salvador. Two men arrested in connection with this case have ties with extreme rightwing groups opposed to Salvadoran land reform. [REDACTED]

In Guatemala terrorism figured as a major tactic of the right, the left, and the Guatemalan Government. Our files contain records of 27 international terrorist attacks in 1981. These included bombings, kidnappings, and four assassination attempts. While most of the international attacks were carried out by leftwing

groups such as the Guerrilla Army of the Poor, two Americans were assassinated by rightwing groups. Thirteen of the attacks were directed at American personnel and property. Other victims of international terrorism in Guatemala included citizens of Japan, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, Spain, and Honduras. [REDACTED]

Among the most noteworthy assassinations were two US missionaries working in Guatemala and a US businessman, who had been kidnapped in December 1980 by leftwing guerrillas, during an attempted rescue by the Guatemalan police. Numerous bombings of foreign facilities were recorded, including the Pan American headquarters, the Honduran airline office, the American Chamber of Commerce office, an Eastern Airlines plane on the ground, the Chevron oil depot in Guatemala City, the British Consul's office, and a US-owned hotel. Other incidents included the murders of an Italian and a Spanish priest working in the area and the kidnapping of an Australian and an American for ransom. [REDACTED]

State-Sponsored International Terrorism

Nations support international terrorist groups or engage in terrorist attacks to influence policies of other countries, to establish or strengthen regional or global influence, and, in some cases, to eliminate or terrorize dissident exiles and nationals from adversary countries. [REDACTED]

In 1980 and 1981 a large number of international terrorist attacks, mostly assassinations, were carried out by governments. These attacks proved to be an efficient method of achieving a limited goal with very little repercussion. Some Third World nations, especially Middle Eastern countries, are likely to continue this practice. [REDACTED]

Many countries are reluctant to condemn states that support or engage in international terrorist activities when those activities are cloaked in the mantle of anti-imperialism. Other countries tolerate state-sponsored terrorist activities because they fear economic or other forms of retaliation by the sponsoring states.

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Some oil-dependent states, for example, are reluctant to take action against Middle Eastern countries that support terrorism. Some of the smaller states fear that they will be added to the target lists. [REDACTED]

Our records list 129 terrorist attacks conducted directly by national governments, but this figure almost certainly understates the incidence of state-sponsored terrorism. More than 80 percent of the 129 attacks took place in 1980 and 1981, and almost 40 percent were assassinations or attempted assassinations. This is roughly six times the percentage of assassinations recorded in non-state-sponsored terrorist attacks. State-sponsored attacks were more lethal than other terrorist incidents, 44 percent resulting in casualties—a total of 60 persons injured and 61 killed. A majority of these attacks occurred in the Middle East, were carried out by Middle East nations, and were directed against expatriates and diplomats from Middle East countries. [REDACTED]

The pattern of state-sponsored international terrorist incidents in 1981 was similar to that of 1980. The 44 attacks occurred in 20 different countries, but almost half were in Lebanon. The attacks were directed against citizens from 17 countries, half of them from the Middle East. Incidents included kidnappings, bombings, assassinations, and armed attacks against embassies or other facilities. During 1981, 21 victims were killed and 28 wounded in state-sponsored international terrorist attacks. [REDACTED]

Soviet Union. The Soviets provide training, arms, and other direct and indirect support to a variety of national insurgent and separatist groups. Many of these groups commit international terrorist attacks as part of their program of revolutionary violence. Moreover, some of the individuals trained and equipped by the Soviets make their way into strictly terrorist groups with little revolutionary potential. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Moscow maintains close relations with and furnishes aid to governments and organizations that directly support terrorist groups. In the Middle East, for example, the Soviets sell large quantities of arms to Libya, knowing that Libya is a major supporter of

many terrorist groups. The Soviets also back a number of Palestinian groups that openly conduct terrorist operations. In Latin America the USSR and Cuba appear to be pursuing a long-term coordinated campaign to establish sympathetic Latin American regimes. The Cubans, and more recently the Soviets, clearly support organizations and groups in Latin America that use terrorism as a basic technique to undermine existing regimes. In other parts of the world, especially Africa, the Soviets have supported guerrilla movements and national liberation organizations that engage in terrorism. [REDACTED]

Libya. Support of terrorist groups has been an element of Libya's foreign policy under Qadhafi since the mid-1970s. Qadhafi has been linked by overwhelming evidence to terrorist attacks and assassinations in Western Europe, the United States, and the Middle East and is known to support terrorist groups and liberation movements worldwide. After the Gulf of Sidra incident, Qadhafi threatened to assassinate President Reagan and other senior US Government officials. The 1981 records contain information on 13 attacks by Libyan assassination squads. [REDACTED]

South Yemen. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen has supported international terrorism since the late 1960s. It provides camps and other training facilities for a number of leftist terrorist groups. The government allows the PFLP and at least one PFLP splinter faction to operate virtually autonomous training centers. Aden also allows the PFLP to train other foreign terrorists at the camp, including members of the Red Army Faction, the Dutch Red Resistance Front, and the ETA. Evidence suggests that South Yemen has supplied arms, munitions, and documents to many terrorists and has allowed its diplomatic missions to be used to support terrorist groups. [REDACTED]

The Government of South Yemen has not participated directly in international terrorist attacks, however, and South Yemeni citizens have been involved in only six incidents during the 14-year period. These six incidents were most likely not sponsored by the government. [REDACTED]

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Syria. As a major supporter of radical Palestinian groups, Syria has provided training, logistic support, and use of diplomatic facilities to groups that are willing to do its bidding. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Syria supports Palestinian elements that engage in international terrorism, including the Black June Organization, which targets moderate Palestinian leaders as well as Israeli interests. Damascus may hope that an increase in international terrorism by radical Palestinian factions will weaken Arafat's control over the Palestinian movement or force him to cooperate more closely with Syria. The Syrian Government also has its own Palestinian group, Saiqa, whose terrorist arm has occasionally been used to carry out attacks in the Middle East. [REDACTED]

Iraq. During the past three years, the Iraqi Government has reduced support to non-Palestinian terrorists and placed restrictions on many Palestinian groups, moving closer to its moderate Arab neighbors. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Baghdad regularly carries out acts of terrorism against domestic enemies living abroad as well as against representatives of foreign governments opposed to the Iraqi regime. For the last three years, the main focus of Iraqi terrorist activities has been Iran and its allies. The Iraqis have used their own agents, Palestinian radical groups, and Iranian exiles to carry out attacks against Iranians in the Middle East and Europe. The Iraqi Government conducted at least nine terrorist attacks against Iranian diplomats in 1980 and at least four in 1981, all in Lebanon. In 1981 the Iraqi Government perpetrated three attacks against dissidents living abroad, including the May murder of a dissident living in Dubai, UAE. [REDACTED]

Iran. Despite its radical, anti-Western policies, its support for Islamic fundamentalists, and widespread government terrorism within Iran, the Khomeini regime provides only limited support to international terrorist groups. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Our records, [REDACTED] list 24 international terrorist attacks carried out directly by the Iranian Government in 1980 and five in 1981. All of the attacks in 1981 occurred in Beirut and were directed primarily against Iraqi diplomats. Most Iranian-sponsored attacks on Iraqi targets in Lebanon not undertaken by the Iranian Government were carried out by Lebanese Shiite militia members. [REDACTED]

Cuba. Havana openly supports and advocates armed revolution as the only means for leftist forces to gain power in Latin America. Cuba also supports organizations and groups in Latin America that use terrorism to undermine existing regimes. The Cubans have played an important role in facilitating the movement of men and weapons into Central and South America, providing direct support in the form of training, arms, safe havens, and advice to a wide variety of guerrilla groups. [REDACTED]

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